

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims, as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for detecting disseminated tumor cells from a body fluid, in which non-tumor cells which express at least one of cytokeratins 1-20 are separated from tumor cells which express at least one of cytokeratin 1-20, in which
 - a) tumor cells are enriched by a cell separation medium which has a density in the range from 1.055 to 1.065 g/ml being overlaid with the body fluid and being centrifuges, thus separating cytokeratin-positive and cytokeratin-negative blood cells from one another, with the enriched tumor cells being present in the same fraction as the cytokeratin-negative blood cells; and
 - b) it is determined whether the enriched cells express an epithelial marker, which is cytokeratin, characterized in that there is reverse transcription of mRNA from the enriched cells, and a PCR is carried out with at least one cytokeratin-specific primer, where the cytokeratin is selected from the group consisting of cytokeratin 1 to 19 and 20.
2. (currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in claim 20, characterized in that~~ of claim 1, wherein the centrifugation is carried out in a vessel which is divided by a porous barrier, a filter, a sieve, or a flap into an upper and a lower compartment, the cell separation medium being introduced into the lower compartment, and the body fluid being put in the upper compartment.
3. (currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 21 ~~2~~, characterized in ~~that~~ wherein the porous barrier, the filter, the sieve or the flap ~~have~~ has a thickness of 0.5-10 mm, ~~preferably of 1-5 mm~~.
4. (currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 21 ~~or 22~~ 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the porous barrier, the filter, the sieve or the flap ~~have~~ has a porous size of 20-100 μm , ~~preferably 20-30 μm~~ .

5. (currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in either of claims 22 or 23,~~ characterized in that of claim 4, wherein the porous barrier, the filter, the sieve or the flap ~~consist of~~ is a hydrophobic material or ~~are~~ is coated with a hydrophobic material.
6. (currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,~~ characterized in that of claim 1, wherein the cell separation medium comprises a dye which makes the cell separation medium distinguishable in color from the overlying body fluid, and thus simplifies location of the interphase.
7. (currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in any of the preceding claims,~~ characterized in that of claim 1, wherein in step b) there is determination in single or combination analysis of whether the enriched cells express at least one epithelial marker, ~~namely one of~~ from cytokeratins 1-20.
8. (currently amended) A kit comprising a cell separation medium which has a density in the range 1.055-1.065 g/ml, and means for detecting the expression of the epithelial marker cytokeratin, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the means for detecting the expression of at least one of cytokeratins 1-20 is ~~selected from~~ a cytokeratin-specific primer[[s]].
9. (currently amended) The kit ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 27 ~~8,~~ characterized in that further comprising a washing buffer, ~~optionally in concentrated form,~~ is additionally ~~present~~ for washing the enriched cells.
10. (currently amended) The kit ~~as claimed in either of~~ either of claims ~~27 8~~ 27 8 or 28, characterized in that further comprising at least one centrifugation vessel is additionally present.
11. (new) The method of claim 3, wherein the porous barrier, the filter, the sieve or the flap has a thickness of 1-5 mm.
12. (new) The method of claim 4, wherein the porous barrier, the filter, the sieve or the flap has a porous size of 20-30 μm .

13. (new) The kit of claim 9, wherein the washing buffer is in concentrated form.